



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Report of the Visit Regarding the Transfer of Twenty Dogs to Caserta, Italy

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the findings and conclusions of the Commissioner for Animal Welfare following the recommendation to cancel proposed transfer of twenty (20) dogs from the Animal Welfare Directorate (AWD) Shelter in Malta to Dogs Town SRL in Caserta, Italy, set to happen on Wednesday, 17 December 2025. The visit to Dogs Town SRL, undertaken on Monday, 15 December 2025 by the Commissioner for Animal Welfare, Dr Fleur Abela, accompanied by the General Manager of the Malta Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (MSPCA), Ms Mary Cassar Torregiani in her capacity as an independent expert¹, was conducted pursuant to the Commissioner's mandate under the Animal Welfare Act (Chapter 439 of the Laws of Malta).

The visit, together with a comparison exercise of the Animal Welfare Directorate Shelter in Għammieri, led to the cancellation of the proposed transfer. While Dogs Town SRL was found to be duly licensed, registered on the EU TRACES system, and compliant with applicable regulatory and documentation requirements—including authorisation to conduct post-mortem examinations under the oversight of the Italian public health system—the overall assessment concluded that the standards observed at the receiving shelter did not offer an enhancement to the welfare, quality of life, or long-term homing prospects of the dogs proposed for transfer.

The report further notes that the proposed transfer did not arise from a single shortcoming, but from a combination of challenges within the national animal welfare framework, with specific shortcomings in the management of the shelter in this instance. These include the prolonged stay of long-term dogs at the AWD Shelter, a lack of behavioural, and training resources, accompanied by a need of more better veterinary care, and the absence of a fully structured, multidisciplinary adoption and fostering system. While the transfer of animals abroad is not a new practice and is routinely undertaken by some NGOs and private entities, the report highlights that where the State is involved, it carries a responsibility to ensure that any receiving facility demonstrably meets or exceeds domestic standards, and that due diligence extends beyond licensing and documentary compliance.

¹ For the sake of transparency and record, the Commissioner clarifies that the independent expert provided their views and advice without any remuneration or formal engagement. Their involvement was driven by a serious concern for the welfare of the dogs that were to be transferred. The independent expert joined the visit after being approached by the Commissioner in the late hours of Sunday, 14 December 2025.

The findings highlight that the transfer of the dogs could have been avoided had coordinated, preventative measures been in place. The report therefore advocates for a shift away from reactive solutions such as mass transfers, and towards systemic reform, infrastructural investment, and strengthened collaboration between government, NGOs, professionals, and volunteers. Central to this approach is the recognition of animals as sentient beings whose welfare must remain the primary consideration in all policy and operational decisions where they are involved.

INTRODUCTION

The visit to Dogs Town SRL (Caserta, Italy) was prompted by a proposed transfer of twenty dogs from Malta, with the relevant procedures having been initiated prior to 1 November 2025. In accordance with Article 44A(2) of the Animal Welfare Act (Chapter 439 of the Laws of Malta), the Commissioner exercised her statutory mandate to assess the welfare implications of the proposed transfer.

The recommendation to cancel the proposed transfer was based solely on the welfare of the animals in Malta and on an assessment of whether the conditions at the shelter in Italy would represent an improvement over those currently available under the management of the Animal Welfare Directorate (AWD). This recommendation is not intended to comment on, interfere with, or prejudice the operations of Dogs Town SRL, nor does it intend to affect any agreements or arrangements the shelter may have with other entities or institutions operating under a different legal jurisdiction.

In this context, it is important to clarify that the Maltese Commissioner for Animal Welfare has no legal authority to publish, disclose, or otherwise disseminate documents belonging to a private animal shelter established in Italy. Such documents and images remain the property of the Italian shelter and are protected under applicable data protection and privacy laws, including Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR). This protection applies particularly when the documents contain personal data, such as an individual's name or contact details associated with a legal entity, as they are still considered personal information under the GDPR.

Any disclosure, publication, or processing of these documents without a valid legal basis or the explicit consent of the relevant data controller would constitute a breach of data protection obligations. Moreover, the Commissioner's remit is limited to matters within Maltese jurisdiction and does not extend to the unilateral publication of documents originating from, or owned by, entities established in another EU Member State.

Similarly, the Commissioner cannot publish photographs that may be subject to interpretation or opinion, which could potentially affect the reputation of a legal entity incorporated in Italy.

In light of the above, the publication of such documents or images would be unlawful and inappropriate, particularly given the strict requirements of data protection legislation. This report is intended solely to present an assessment of animal welfare within the scope of Maltese law and is not intended to affect or comment on the operations of any entity established outside Malta.

PART I – OVERVIEW OF THE VISIT

The Commissioner and Ms. Mary Cassar Torregiani arrived at Dogs Town SRL on 15 December 2025 at 14:00, with unprecedented access granted by the shelter. The visit allowed a thorough assessment of the animals' daily care, including feeding, routine walks, and general maintenance beyond food and water intake.

During the visit, the Commissioner and Ms. Cassar Torregiani engaged directly with one of the partners of Dogs Town SRL, to obtain insights into the shelter's operations, staffing, and adoption programs. Additionally, both the Commissioner and Ms. Cassar Torregiani met other members of staff at the shelter, of these a veterinary doctor engaged on a full-time basis on-site, a member of the administration, and an assisting member of staff who was present to assist with translation in the eventuality that it was needed.

1.1. Licensing of Dogs Town SRL (Caserta, Italy)

Upon request, the shelter provided all relevant licences and permits, with copies made available to the Maltese representatives, of these the following documents were presented:

1. A valid license to act as a curator and guarantor of animals who are placed under judicial care until their owners are no longer serving a sentence of imprisonment, or pending proceedings of abuse of animals. In the event of the latter, the shelter would take the animal/s under its care and custody pending sentencing. If the court declares that the suspect has not abused of an animal, the sentient being is given back to its original owner. Where however, a suspected is found guilty and convicted of a crime against animals – with penalties becoming harsher in Italy as of December 2025 – the animal remains under the care and custody of the shelter with the right to re-home the sentient being in question.

2. A valid authorization and license to perform veterinary procedures and health checks on animals within the premises of Dogs Town SRL since its opening, together with the authorization from the authorities that it does meet the standards to hold the licenses of a shelter in line with sanitary and health requirements.

3. Additional certificates providing assurances of the standards maintained by Dogs Town SRL, including official authorisation from the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) to perform autopsies on carcasses of animals found deceased or subject to abuse. In Italy, any structure performing diagnostic or post-mortem examinations must operate within the framework of national public and animal health systems under the oversight of the ISS, the principal technical-scientific body supporting animal health, welfare, and veterinary public health under the Ministry of Health. The ISS not only inspects and certifies these facilities but also ensures compliance with Italian and EU laws and public health standards, effectively greenlighting the shelter to conduct autopsies and other diagnostic examinations in accordance with national and European regulations.

This certification is intended to ensure that Dogs Town SRL meets the legal and technical requirements for autopsy and diagnostic work.

In addition to the above, license and compliance documents were further provided confirming that Dogs Town SRL operates in compliance with EU TRACES standards. The EU TRACES (Trade Control and Expert System) platform allows for the legal movement of live animals between EU Member States, and registration on the platform confirms that the shelter is licensed to operate and that any animals transferred meet EU health requirements, including vaccinations, veterinary checks, and microchipping. TRACES also provides an official traceability system, allowing authorities to track the origin, movement, and health status of animals being transferred.

Finding/s:

In primus, the Commissioner denotes and stresses that the shelter showed no signs of it being a kill shelter, and that this element was also included within their policy. Secondly, while TRACES registration and related permits demonstrate compliance with EU regulations and legal standards, it is important to note that these guarantees are limited to health and

documentation requirements. TRACES does not address or guarantee the welfare, enrichment, socialisation, or suitability of transferred animals, particularly those with complex needs or long-stay histories at Animal Welfare in Malta —considerations that were central to the Commissioner’s assessment both during the visit and prior to the departure from Malta, yet which cannot be reflected within the TRACES framework.

As such, licensing and TRACES compliance alone cannot assure that the transfer of animals from Malta would enhance their welfare or meet the high standards expected by the Commissioner for Animal Welfare. This underscores the necessity of direct, on-site assessment of shelter conditions, staffing, socialisation, and transport arrangements before approving any transfer.

1.2. **Welfare of the Dogs**

Having been shown around the premises of the shelter, Commissioner Abela and Ms. Cassar Torregiani saw the pens, grooming section, veterinary area, autopsy area, the quarantine section, and the administrative section, the Commissioner and Ms. Cassar Torregiani observed the bedding, and feed pots to be used by the dogs which did not mark any improvement from what the dogs have at the AWD shelter where the latter mentioned objects are of a better standard.

Being the pens for the dogs set to arrive from Malta were already selected and ready for their arrival, the Commissioner saw the state of the same and noted that the overall conditions were not of a better standard from that of the AWD shelter in Malta.

In respect to the veterinary area, the Commissioner observed that it was well equipped for the provision of medication to the animals residing within the shelter, and that it can carry out minimally invasive surgeries. However, emergency surgeries of a complex nature may be a difficult task for them to undertake, and it is with this in mind that the shelter had entered into contracts with entities that could provide such services to the animal. This could be compared to the current sub-contracting of services between the Animal Welfare Directorate and external veterinary clinics, which have been selected following a public procurement process in line with the Public Procurement Regulations.

It was after such that the Commissioner was also shown the grooming area that was relatively new when compared to the other areas shown earlier throughout the visit. During this short presentation of the grooming area, neither the Commissioner nor Ms. Cassar Torregiani were told whether the grooming area is used prior to the visits of potential adopters or the day of adoption.

Finding/s:

While the Commissioner acknowledged and continues to acknowledge that all licensing and certification are in order, with no doubt having arisen of the latter even after review of the documents at hand, Commissioner Abela continues to believe that the overall conditions, and welfare advantages do not outweigh those being presented in Malta, particularly if the Animal Welfare Directorate were to make improvements to the pens within which the dogs are placed, and to the system of social integration of the dogs within our society.

Moreover, the Commissioner is of the view that a shelter that receives dogs, or cats, from any place at a cost, should not only meet the legal standards but also demonstrate the capacity to provide high-quality care than what is provided domestically, with such care being provided during the time they are under the care and custody of the shelter selected for the transfer.

1.3. Rates of adoptions / homing and Staffing

Being provided with the number of resident dogs, the Commissioner was informed that at the time of the visit Dogs Town SRL cared for approximately four hundred fifty (450) to five hundred (500) dogs with a full-time staff of fifteen individuals, including two veterinarians, and two founders (who themselves are vets by profession). The latter are assisted by a network of volunteers within Caserta, and all over Italy, with volunteers outside the region assisting on adoptions and homing within other regions of Italy – particularly the Northern Area.

In hearing the latter, and being aware of the current situation of the dogs within Animal Welfare that employs three veterinarians for the dog section (at the time there were around eighty-six (86) dogs) and the cat section, who are already over stretched as they are, the Commissioner began to grow concerned about the dogs' overall health if transferred to Italy. With this concern being further justified when one understands that the breed of the dogs intended to be transferred is rather fragile in terms of food intake, and bone fragility.

Continuing onto the rates of adoptions in 2025, the Commissioner was informed that the adoption rate for 2025 was over 240 adoptions / homing within Italy, achievable through the network of volunteers established through the years. This point was stressed by the management of the shelter in view of the fact that the intention of the transfer was to find better homing opportunities for the dogs which have been long stayers within Animal Welfare.

Regarding dogs exhibiting behavioral aggression, which in some cases can be observed but managed, the staff assured the Commissioner of the shelter's experience in rehoming such dogs. However, they did not provide return rates, which are critical for assessing whether these adoptions can be considered successful. When asked about the criteria for rehoming dogs that currently show, or have previously shown, behavioural aggression, the staff were unable to provide an answer. The absence of clear criteria and a rehabilitation plan was concerning, as it raises the risk that these dogs may be abandoned or receive inadequate care.

Finding/s:

Having carefully understood what was being said, observing the current situation, and comparing it to the situation within Animal Welfare at the time of the visit, one was not convinced that there would be enough focus on the dogs coming from Malta. These same dogs, are dogs that had already suffered abuse, and negligence before entering the AWD shelter, with additional years in a pen which they did not deserve – with that however, the same dogs have some members of staff and volunteers that care for them, with many going out of their way to make their lives more bearable in the smallest of ways. By comparing that quality life, to one where the quality of life does not improve, a transfer could not be recommended; and that it would have been better to place further efforts into the homing and adoptions of these same dogs in Malta where the follow-up can be ensured, and their overall welfare improved if improvements are made within the system of animal welfare.

The Commissioner observed a structured volunteer system operating across different regions of Italy, particularly for the adoption of bully breed dogs in the northern part of the country. Observing such, the Commissioner has taken this element of the visit as a lesson learned which provides added value, because a system where staff and volunteers comes together can lead to homing and adoption success. A lesson later implemented upon arriving in Naples, and during

the last weeks – with adoption rates of these same dogs rising and different stakeholders coming together.

PART II – PROCUREMENT AND SELECTION OF DOGS

2.1. Procurement and assessment of the Prospective site for Transfer

When considering the current legislative framework, the Commissioner for Animal Welfare is not vested with the authority to be provided with or review contractual agreements for the purposes of reporting, particularly where such contracts fall under the remit of other authorities and entities established within Malta’s legal framework. Accordingly, the Commissioner refrains from commenting on documents which have not been made available to her.

That being said, the Commissioner takes this opportunity to reiterate that the transfer of dogs, or any animal, should not be undertaken where those signing, approving, or advising on such arrangements have not been provided with clear, first-hand feedback that goes beyond video or photographic material. This is a matter involving the lives of sentient beings, which—contrary to their treatment in certain civil law contexts that still reflect outdated Kantian ethical frameworks—are not mere property but living beings deserving of protection, a principle explicitly recognised within article 3 (2) of the Animal Welfare Act (Chapter 439 of the Laws of Malta)².

It is on this basis that there exists an indirect yet significant responsibility on all decision-makers involved to ensure that proper checks are conducted through direct engagement, on-site inspection, and comprehensive welfare assessment prior to committing to any transfer to Italy involving live animals.

2.2. Selection of Dogs

Regrettably the selection of the dogs to be transferred to Italy remains one where clarity is lacking, with the names on the list provided to the Commission being incomplete. The dogs for transfer should have been placed on the list only after objective criteria have been identified. Such is especially crucial, when one does consider that not all animals within the AWD Shelter are in a state of being fit-to-travel.

² Act No. XXXV of 2014 - <https://legislation.mt/eli/act/2014/35/mlt/pdf>

Whereas the list or the selection thereof has not been disclosed to the Commission, the Commission continues to reiterate upon the importance of adequate medical care for all animals – whether dogs, cats, or other animals – at Animal Welfare. Any gap in the system that might exist leads to a stagnant number of adoptions, and long stayers, dogs that should not spend their lives behind metal bars in pens where they do not belong.

PART III - OVERALL FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, & DEVELOPMENTS

3.1. Overall findings

Assessing the overall situation, including the circumstances that led to the proposed transfer, the *Commissioner finds that the transfer of the dogs could have been entirely avoided had all links within the system worked collaboratively and proactively*. In this context, the Commissioner notes that the transfer was a decision taken in response to the overwhelming number of long-stay dogs at Animal Welfare, a situation that had remained largely stagnant, coupled with the inability to house dogs that should be either confiscated or rescued from the streets. This resulted in capacity constraints that affected both the existing long-stay population and the ability of the shelter to accommodate new cases. While the pressures facing the system are acknowledged and long standing, including since it was first established in 2002 following the entry into force of Act No. XXV of 2001³, they do not justify either the selection of the receiving shelter or the selection of the dogs proposed for transfer.

Furthermore, following visits to both the shelter in Caserta and the Animal Welfare Directorate Shelter in Għammieri, the *Commissioner finds merit in exploring alternative solutions aimed at improving the existing infrastructure within the dog and cat sections*. These improvements should include upgrades to pens, the creation or enhancement of off-leash areas for dogs, and improvements to facilities designated for staff and volunteers, which also serve as the primary spaces where potential adopters are introduced to their prospective companion animals. Such a project could be made feasible by reallocating the funds initially earmarked for the transfer towards infrastructural and systemic improvements, thereby addressing several underlying issues simultaneously.

In this regard, while the proposed transfer was not in the best interests of the dogs, the Commissioner firmly believes that a country as small as *Malta stands to benefit significantly*

³ <https://legislation.mt/eli/act/2001/25/eng/pdf>

from a cohesive and coordinated network in which volunteers acting in good faith and shelter staff—particularly within government-run facilities—work collaboratively. Fragmentation or factionalism within the system, whether at an institutional or national level, ultimately does a disservice not only to the dogs at Animal Welfare, but also to all dogs residing in shelters, temporary homes, or living on the streets. In the absence of such a network being established within the Animal Welfare Directorate shelter, it is recommended that a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) be identified to manage the shelter, particularly in relation to adoption and homing processes.

With regard to adoptions and homing, and acknowledging that long-stay dogs were a fundamental factor behind the proposed transfer, the *Commissioner finds that adoption and fostering processes should not be dependent on the opinion or discretion of a single individual assuming sole responsibility.* These processes should be multidisciplinary in nature, involving a behaviourist, a trainer, and a veterinarian, supported by two Animal Welfare representatives responsible for procedural oversight and communication with potential adopters. In this framework, the behaviourist and trainer would play a critical role in assessing the emotional and mental wellbeing of each dog, while facilitating structured social integration beyond the confines of the shelter and with prospective families. This approach is particularly essential where potential adopters have children or other animals within the household. Albeit, considerations should be made in favour of establishing a ‘*Board for the Adoption of Companion Animals*’ that is guided by Terms of Reference and minimum adoption criteria.

3.2. Recommendations

In light of the findings outlined above, and recognising that the proposed transfer was symptomatic of deeper systemic shortcomings rather than an appropriate solution, the Commissioner makes the following recommendations:

1. Immediate and Structural Reform of the Animal Welfare Directorate Shelter:

The Animal Welfare Directorate Shelter requires urgent and structural reform to address long-stay residency, animal welfare degradation, and capacity constraints. This reform must include the immediate engagement of qualified behaviourists, trainers, dog walkers, and additional veterinary and para-veterinary staff. Volunteer-led initiatives that have historically contributed positively to animal welfare—such as structured walks, enrichment, and controlled socialisation—should be formally integrated into

daily operations under a clear framework of accountability and supervision. The absence of these resources has directly contributed to behavioural deterioration and prolonged stays and must be addressed as a priority.

2. **Reallocation of Resources Towards Infrastructure and Enrichment:** Funds initially earmarked for large-scale transfers should be redirected towards upgrading infrastructure within the dog and cat sections of the shelter. This includes improved pens, appropriate off-leash and enrichment areas, and dedicated, welcoming spaces for staff, volunteers, and potential adopters. These spaces are critical to successful adoption outcomes and should be designed to allow dogs to be assessed and introduced to prospective families in environments that promote calm behaviour and positive interaction.
3. **Enhanced Government Oversight and Due Diligence in Animal Transfers:** Where the government is involved in, facilitates, or endorses the transfer of animals abroad, it bears an equal or higher duty of care than NGOs or private individuals. Receiving facilities must demonstrably exceed the welfare standards currently available at the Animal Welfare Directorate Shelter. Licensing and TRACES compliance alone are insufficient. Mandatory on-site inspections, direct engagement with shelter management, assessment of staffing ratios, socialisation practices, and transport logistics must be conducted prior to any approval or contractual commitment.
4. **Transparent, Criteria-Based Selection of Animals for Any Future Transfers:** Any future consideration of animal transfers must be grounded in clear, documented medical and behavioural criteria. The selection process must prioritise the dogs' ability to safely endure transport, their emotional resilience, and their realistic prospects for successful homing. Full lists of animals proposed for transfer, together with supporting assessments, must be provided to the Commissioner for Animal Welfare in advance. Opaque or undocumented selection processes are unacceptable.
5. **Multidisciplinary Adoption and Fostering Framework:** Adoption and fostering decisions must not rest with a single individual assuming sole responsibility. Instead, they should be the outcome of a multidisciplinary process involving a behaviourist, a

trainer, and a veterinarian, supported by designated Animal Welfare representatives responsible for procedural oversight and communication with potential adopters. This approach ensures balanced decision-making, safeguards animal welfare, and reduces the risk of failed placements.

6. **Establishment of a Board for the Adoption of Companion Animals:** Consideration should be given to establishing a Board for the Adoption of Companion Animals, operating under clear Terms of Reference and minimum adoption criteria. The Board should be multidisciplinary in composition and tasked with oversight of adoption policies, consistency of decision-making, and alignment with best practices. Such a body would introduce transparency, accountability, and continuity to adoption and fostering processes, particularly in cases involving long-stay or behaviourally complex animals.
7. **Formal Partnerships with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):** In the absence of a fully functioning internal network between staff and volunteers, the Commissioner recommends that the Directorate consider entering into a management agreement with a reputable NGO to run the shelter, particularly with respect to adoption, fostering, and socialisation programmes. NGOs with proven experience bring established systems, expertise, and community engagement that significantly improve homing outcomes and animal welfare – testament to this is the homing of dogs from Animal Welfare over the last weeks, with other dogs currently undergoing a vetting process for a potential home.
8. **Improved Transport Standards and Oversight:** Any future transport of animals must meet strict welfare standards, including appropriate vehicle design, cage comfort, journey duration limits, and sufficient staffing to monitor animal wellbeing throughout the journey. Transport should never be undertaken as a solution to systemic failings within the shelter.
9. **National Coordination and Accountability Framework:** Malta would benefit from a coordinated national framework that brings together government shelters, NGOs,

volunteers, and veterinary professionals under shared objectives and protocols. Fragmentation or factionalism within the system undermines animal welfare and public trust. Clear lines of responsibility, regular reporting, and ongoing monitoring must be established to ensure lessons learned translate into lasting improvements.

3.3. Developments

Following the visit, the Commissioner recommended that the operation be cancelled, with a view to keeping the dogs scheduled for transfer to Italy in Malta. Subsequently, upon the Commissioner and Ms. Cassar Torregiani's return to Malta, the Commissioner, together with MSPCA, Noah's Ark, other shelters, volunteers within the Animal Welfare Shelter, and other entities within the functioning of the State began working to rehome long-stay dogs within the shelter.

Dogs that have left the shelter did so only after all available options were carefully considered, including their long-term prospects, welfare and relevant assessments. These efforts resulted in over twenty-five dogs either successfully rehomed or currently in the process of being rehomed within the same, an outcome made possible despite the initial, justified, uproar in regard to the transfer.

Additionally, following further assessment, the Commission, with the support of members within the animal welfare system, volunteers, and shelters, remains in discussions to identify alternative pathways for rehoming the remaining dogs. Such efforts can only be sustainable and effective in the long term through stronger enforcement and if all parties—including NGOs, activists, and the State—work together in a coordinated and supportive manner, aligned around a shared objective: safeguarding the welfare of animals under the care and custody of the Animal Welfare Directorate, including their successful and safe rehoming. Strengthened enforcement also serves a preventive function, helping to reduce instances of abuse, neglect, and omission of care, thereby decreasing the number of animals entering shelters or living on the streets and allowing greater focus on other priority areas within the animal welfare system.

CONCLUSION

The recommendation to cancel the proposed transfer of dogs to Italy—which was subsequently welcomed and decided by the Parliamentary Secretariat for Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Animal Rights within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries, and Animal Rights—was based solely on considerations of animal welfare and the principle that any relocation undertaken by the State must demonstrably exceed the standard of care available domestically. While regulatory compliance and international cooperation mechanisms such as TRACES are essential safeguards, they cannot, in isolation, ensure improved welfare outcomes for animals with complex and long-term needs.

This report underscores the importance of addressing systemic pressures at their source. Investment in infrastructure, further engagement of full-time support staff, enrichment, professional expertise, and coordinated adoption frameworks is the sustainable and humane pathway as opposed to reliance on large-scale transfers. Strengthening collaboration between government services, NGOs, professionals, and volunteers can significantly enhance outcomes without removing animals from the jurisdiction where oversight, follow-up, and accountability are most effective.

Ultimately, while the circumstances surrounding the proposed transfer, should be improved through the recalibration of priorities, reinforcing existing strengths, strengthening enforcement, and implementing reforms that place animal welfare at the centre of a resilient and forward-looking national framework.

By building on the insights gained through this process, Malta can continue to evolve its animal welfare system in a manner that is both compassionate and sustainable, ensuring that decisions affecting sentient beings are informed by evidence, collaboration, and a shared commitment to continuous improvement.
